

NORTHERN UFO NEWS



NORTHERN UFO NEWS: Monthly newsletter of the Northern UFO Network (NUFON)
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Contents: P.2 News Review Magazine Round-Up Cosmos 1068 again
 P.3 Hoaxing...1979 More Airship reports
 P.4-6 Investigations: Including CEIs with An,EM,Physio effects

EDITORIAL: "The search for natural explanations"

There is a strange thing about UFO research. Either you are a 'believer' (what ever that is supposed to be), or you are a sceptic - a total enemy, to be shot down in flames with as much vigour (and usually as little rationality) as the supposed negative arguments being countered. One can think of the great adversaries of modern day Ufology, such as Philip Klass or Ian Ridpath. It is funny really to see the way that so called 'unbiased thinkers' react when they see criticism of particular reports made by people such as these. All scientific appraisal becomes swamped by a deluge of emotions. Nobody must be allowed to challenge precious held convictions that UFOs have exotic origins.

Now, I would be the first to admit that these debunkers (as they are usually labelled) often react with similar hostility and lack of reasoning. One need only think of dear old Patrick Moore. The size of his naivety about UFOs is only matched by his apparently limitless amount of belief that he can explain everything. The whole problem of belief and disbelief is an intriguing one, because there seem to be so few 'sceptical believers' - which in truth is what every Ufologist should be. Presumably the answer to this 'them versus us' syndrome is a psycho-social one. However, having looked at things rationally I find it most unfortunate that we fail completely to learn anything from 'the other side', since it is conceit of the ultimate degree to think that 'we' are right and 'they' are wrong. I would have thought that by now we would at least be aware that there is no precise distinction between such things in Ufology. Rather we have a gentle gradation from one to the other.

One person, in particular, whom I feel has been frequently maligned is Ian Ridpath, with whom I happen to have had some contact. True - he argues against the ETH. True - he denounces the appalling standards of UFO Investigation. True - he even went so far as to proclaim that Ufologists were hiding the lack of physical evidence. This led to his ostracisation from the UFO community inevitably, but I find it odd that he only reflects what we all must know to be the truth if we are prepared to face that truth. Sadly, most Ufologists are cowards. Yet, Ridpath does not disbelieve in UFOs. Rather he prefers to search for rational, natural, although possibly novel, explanations to the mystery cases. What, I wonder, is criminal about that? Certainly Peter Warrington and myself found his approach refreshing when he helped us to stage a private seminar in London on the Stonehenge films last September. It was only his sceptical approach that enabled us to confront a number of important atmospheric scientists over the case. Yet he did not do it to shoot the case down. I got the distinct impression that he would have been as happy as us had the evidence provided been truly significant.

The Daily Express of July 30th provides another case in point. Under the heading "UFOs: Has Russia Found the Answer?" is an article which discusses several impressive new Russian cases and the theories of Dr. M. Dimitriyev that these phenomena may often be 'chemiluminescence' (cold radiation). His arguments are certainly plausible for certain UFO manifestations, since they explain things such as light output, rotation, and even EM interference. Yet will Ufologists listen? I suspect not. Some might mutter, 'Oh yes, well this may apply to some UFOs' and then go off and promptly forget about it, proclaiming the next ovoid UFO they encounter an 'alien craft'. They do not want answers - they want mysteries. However, Ufology is about UFO reports - all UFO reports, and we really must not ignore logical and testable theories such as this one. I think we have to start pulling our heads out of the clouds, for a time at least, and looking more thoroughly at earth-based ideas such as this one before we set off in pursuit of those illusive (or illusory?) spaceships. Ian Ridpath may be public enemy number one, so far as British Ufologists are concerned, but I think I know who is the better ufologist - Ridpath or his critics.

NEWS REVIEW:

:: A final reminder about the BUFORA conference to be held in central London on Sunday August 26 and Bank Holiday Monday (27th). Speakers to include: Dr Allen Hynek, Dr Leo Sprinkle, Eduardo Russo and Juan Ballester-Olmos.

:: Any local groups who are not already doing so are recommended to liaise with UFO INTERNATIONAL (c/o 63 Malvern Drive, North Common, Warmley, Bristol). This excellent group (formed September 1978) operate on a no-nonsense, membership by invitation basis. They conduct investigations in SW England, and also have some imaginative research projects (eg UFOs and the weather, Green Mist in relation to UFOs) They publish a fine bi-monthly magazine called QUEST.

:: Another group asking for contacts are SKYSCAN (12 Hazel Close, Tunnel Hill, Worcester). However, I have heard suggestions that they intend to start a UFO group network, which seems odd in view of the existence of N FON, SUFON and a Midlands network - to which they presumably could contribute effectively.

:: Randall Jones-Pugh has kindly supplied details of his book (written with the late F.W. Holliday) "The Dyfed Enigma". Published by Faber & Faber on Oct 15 it has 192pp and costs £5.95. It is a chronological account of the South Wales wave from 1974 to 1977, examining cases, folklore connections and animal disturbances. Incidentally, on the subject of books, August 16 sees the publication by Robert Hale of "UFOs: A British Viewpoint" by Jenny Randles & Peter Warrington.

:: NB IMPORTANT CHANGE OF ADDRESS. Would all NUFON and UFOIN members note that Treasurer Peter Warrington is no longer at his Alderley Edge address. All correspondence should go to 597, Mauldeth Rd West, Chorlton, Manchester M21 9SH for the present. A new permanent address will be forthcoming very shortly.

:: It seems to be time for moving as two other address changes should be noted (and your editor will be moving too at the end of the year!) MUFOB are now at: -64 Alric Avenue, New Malden, Surrey KT3 4JW (Telephone as before) Andy Collins is now at: * 19 Oaks Crescent, Chapel Ash, Wolverhampton, West Midlands. WV3 9SA (Telephone: Wolverhampton 711095)

MAGAZINE ROUND-UP

Congratulations are due this month to FORTEAN TIMES on their excellent new 'newsstand' format. It is tremendous value at 75p for 56 A4 size pages with colour on front and back (including a full size new colour print of Nessie). Articles inside cover the usual wide variety such as Miracles, Mystery fires, Devil Names and a new UFO column by Nigel Watson (in his inimitable style that will be well known to NUFON readers). It is just an experiment but it deserves to succeed. (9-12 St Annes Ct, London W1) FSR starts its 25th year (25-1) with cases from Australia, Greece, Russia, Italy and a couple of UK ones (both in the N FON region). There is also a most important theoretical article by Dr Pierre Guerrin of the Official French study team GEPAN (70p from FSR Publications, West Malling, Maidstone, Kent) PROTEUS from UFO SIS is back including a piece on the Robertson Panel (35p from UFO SIS) LANTERN Summer 79 articles on East Anglian mysteries (£1 pa 3 Dunwich Way, Lowestoft, Suffolk NR32 4RZ) CNK May 79 has its usual potpourri, including a UFO fashion contest for dema- ufologists! (37 The Close, Dunmow, Essex CM6 1EW)

COSMOS 1068 - Again

It seems that the ghost of this well known sighting on New Years Eve last (at about 19.10 hrs) will not rest. As explained in previous issues NUFON has on file now close on 100 individual reports from all over the region of the brightly lit object that looked like an aircraft with windows on fire. It was in view between 2 and 8 minutes, according to location of witnesses. Several reports of airline pilot encounters were made, and Manchester Airport claim to have tracked it on radar. It is officially explained as the re-entry of debris from Russian satellite COSMOS 1068. If you saw the spectacular film of the re-entry of SKYLAB then you will realise that this is feasible. However, there is a new report from a Mr Stuart Cortez who describes precisely what others saw and is adamant that it was not a satellite burn up. His qualifications for stating this are impressive. He has worked at Cape Canaveral, Edwards Air Force Base, USA, and as a flight test observer with De Havilland Aircraft. He is extremely well acquainted with test aircraft and both rockets and missiles in all modes and at all altitudes. He says, "What was it? I do not know... what I saw last New Years Eve was something new... lets have the truth. Or is there something going on in this world that dare not be explained to mere people?"

It seems that UFO hoaxers are getting more sophisticated. On Saturday, June 30 a call was relayed to me in Wallasey (where I happened to be for the weekend). It was from the Sunday Mirror, who advised of a report they had had from frightened witnesses in Altrincham and Hale, Greater Manchester. It seems that around 18.30 on June 28 they had dialed one another on their home phones and intercepted a conversation between what purported to be the pilot of a DC-10 airliner flying into Manchester and various ground controllers. The claim was that a formation of UFOs was spotted over Barton (which I can see from my home now as I type this). RAF jets were scrambled and the startled 'witnesses' listened in horror as a chase was described for 30 minutes, with an order to 'open fire' relayed from Washington culminating in one UFO being hit and crashing in a Yorkshire park to be 'cordoned off'. I noted inconsistencies in the story immediately (eg only one controller allegedly controlled all the flights, no call sign was used by the DC-10 etc). I advised the press that it seemed suspicious, and that it may well have been a hoax perpetrated on what they considered reliable witnesses. Peter Warrington, who was in Manchester, took on immediate investigation and our suspicions enhanced when several of the facts did not check out at all. Meanwhile the story was used on July 1 and caused quite a stir. Then on July 2 the Manchester Evening News reported a second instance. A young girl (again in Hale) was talking to her boyfriend in Nottingham when they overheard a contact between UFO and RAF planes over Anglesey. This time three RAF planes were 'shot down' (as Jeff Porter put it later... score: RAF 1 UFOs 3). The girl was badly frightened by her experience, but the coincidence was enough and the GPO at Altrincham stated that they were convinced it was a clever hoax (possibly by one of their senior staff). Checks are still going on, but calls have stopped and MUFORA is satisfied that this is an example of the new kind of electronic hoax that ufologists might well be up against in the future.

MORE AIRSHIP NEWS Researched by Granville Oldroyd of NLUFOIG

What appears to be a very important passage has been uncovered by Granville Oldroyd in the Gazette News, Blackpool published Feb 28 1913. Under the heading 'Mystery of the Air' it seems to offer a solution to the 1913 airship wave. I shall quote a few relevant sections: "The stories about mysterious aircraft cruising around our shores must be thoroughly investigated. So far as quantity goes, the evidence that the lights of one at least of these vessels have been sighted from various parts of England is increasing. The reports are not, indeed, all credible..... There is on the other hand a striking concurrence of testimony from many witnesses which seems to point to no other conclusion than that an airship was hovering high above their heads, and as the presence of an English vessel of this type may be ruled out of the speculation, the only reasonable inference is that the visitor had come oversea... Some little time elapsed before the authorities admitted that a foreign airship had really been seen or heard... but the statement made by the First Lord of the Admiralty on November 27 left no doubt on this point. As Mr Churchill admitted, in developing, by prolonged and sedulous experiment and by lavish expenditure the utility of this type of aerial war vessel Germany has won a great pre-eminence. When the first Lord not long ago 'was informed' that she possessed one naval, one military, one experimental and two passenger airships, he might safely have added that several others are believed to be at the disposal of the German Government... In fact there are several German Airships that might have accomplished the feat of crossing to England..." (My emphasis, JR) This fits well with Nigel Watson's published ideas about the Airships and pre World War One Invasion scares. Granville also notes that the following Friday the same paper relates how 'several residents' of Poulton-Le-Fylde saw strange lights and heard a whirring propeller 'several nights ago'.

LOW DEFINITION ACTIVITY

Ref	Date	Time	Location	Object	Evaluation	Level	Inv
78-232	Oct 5	20-15	Stoke, Staffs	R,G,W LITS	Insuff Data	C	UFOFA
78-235	Dec 12	18-00	Poulton, Lancs	W LITS & Tail	Meteor	E	PAPURG
7947	Mar 4	23-30	Burslem, Staffs	B/W LITS	Meteor	C	UFOFA
7949	Mar 23	21-00	Edgbaston, W. Mid	W LITS	Satellite	A	UFOSES
7950	May 4	02.30	Padgate, Cheshire	W Star	Prob Aircraft	B	MIGAP
7954	Jun 1	03.50	Croxeth, Msyside	Sily 'dot'	Prob Aircraft	D	MIGAP
7956	Jul 6	02.40	Knutsford, Cheshire	W LITS	Aircraft	B	MIGAP

LOW DEFINITION Total 7 Aircraft 3, Meteor 2, Satellite 1, Insuff 1 UFO = NIL

Note that the closure of Manchester Airport (for runway modifications) during the night is leading to numerous UFO reports from witnesses in Cheshire and Merseyside unfamiliar with early AM aircraft with bright landing lights on. In fact if anyone in these areas (or Greater Manchester or East Lancs) wants to see a 'UFO' they should look out for a Swissair DC9 which lands between 2 and 2.45 am each night. It switches its searchlights on quite often over mid Lancashire, 40 or 50 miles from landing.

MEDIUM DEFINITION ACTIVITY

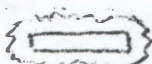
7230	Summer 21.00	Billinge, Msysde	Ball, buzzing	Ball Lightning	C	MIGAP
78-231	Jan 25 16.45	Hemsworth, W Yks	Orange Ball	Insuff Data	C	CONTACT UK
7951	May 18 23.15	Hendley, Cheshire	Dark Cigar, R LIT	Insuff Data	B	MIGAP
7952	May 25 21.55	Levenshulme, Gt Mc	Silv Oval, B LIT	Aircraft	B	MUFORA

Total 8 Insuff Data 4, Ball Lightning 1, Aircraft 1 UFO 2 = 25%

78-231 Jun 12 02.44 Dosthill, Staffs Level C (6-S) Inv: Graham Hall (HAPI)

Mrs Grewcock (age 53) observed the object from her kitchen window facing E. It was a semi-circle of pulsing light that was yellow but tinged orange at the right hand side. It was the apparant size of a 10p piece at arms length and appeared mechanical. She called to her husband and he observed it also for 2 minutes as it moved SE, following the line of the ancient Watling Street along the borders with Warwickshire. When first seen elevation was 45 degrees and when lost it was at 15 degrees. No sound was heard at any time (the window was opened). Witnesses used to live close to Birmingham Airport. They reported no traffic in the area at the time.

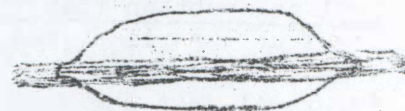
7944 Jan 11 16.00 on Around Stoke, Staffs A (39-MS) INV: Alan Beard & Martin Keatman (UFORA)



These are multiple independant observations of objects seen from various parts of Stoke, Silverdale (just west of Stoke) and Willenhall, north of Birmingham. They occurred at 15.55, 16.20, 18.05 and 19.20 but relate to similar phenomena moving N and, in some instances, meandering around in the Stoke area. They fit in well with similar observations recorded by UFORA and UFOSIS from Jan 9 and 10 (see earlier NUNs). Speculation was, and still is, that unusual air effects distorted aircraft passing over heading towards Manchester. Several reports did indicate vapour trails. At present the case is classified as Insufficient Data.

7945 Jan 20 08.40 Meresby, Cumbria Level C (4-S) Inv: NLUFOIG UNKNOWN

A costing manager travelling to work in Workington had just picked up a fellow worker. In the E they saw the object, seemingly stationary at about 5000 feet. They estimate the length of the object as 500-1000 feet ('collosal' was the description). It was a rounded dish shape, with flatter upper and lower surfaces, glowing with a bright silver light. Across the centre was a pink band of hazy light that extended to the sides for a small way. It was difficult to assess how far away the object was. They watched it move to the north quite slowly, leaving a faint haze behind it as it did so. It then stopped and backtracked for about 5 miles, before moving off N again and accelerating until it finally vanished at an incredible speed. Total duration was 3-4 minutes. There was no sound.



7953 May 25 20.10 Wigton, Cumbria Level C (5-S) Inv: NLUFOIG UNKNOWN

A man and wife, their 10 year old daughter and a work colleague of the husband all observed an object through the lounge window on an exceptionally clear night. It was some distance away in the E, at 10 degree elevation, moving SE on a slow straight path. As it was so low it was lost temporarily but seen again in the south a minute later, moving W. It was now higher and leaving a short trail. It moved much faster on an erratic course. It was lost again but quickly reappeared in the West, and again after being lost reappeared in the same area moving erratically. Total duration was over 10 minutes. It disappeared by tilting and shooting off at tremendous speed. Through binoculars it looked like a silver flat disc with a small blue dome in the centre. Estimated size was 100 feet. Some photos were taken but unfortunately the object did not appear on the prints.



THE UFO THAT GOT INTO TROUBLE

CE1 An, Physio Submitted by Geoffrey Grundill

Summer 1975 Workington, Cumbria

78-234 UNKNOWN Level B

Geoffrey was himself the witness, on a hot sunny day at about 18.20. He was alone in the house at the time, listening to the radio and looking west out of a window. He was then aged 15. Suddenly an object glided into view 'like a balloon' around the gable end of the house. At first he took it to be an aircraft in trouble, but as it stopped and hovered by a tree (just a few feet from him and only about 20 feet high) he knew it was not. In structure it was not unlike a smooth silvery aircraft of unusual design. It had a long fuselage, tall tail, two short wings, a 'ball gear' on the front underside and a dome on top. There was no variation in colour



even for this 'cockpit'. He turned down the radio and opened the window. There was no sound and the surroundings were oddly quiet. The object then manoeuvred (still keeping its front towards him) as if struggling to be free of the surroundings, crossing over a lamppost and narrowly missing rooftops. It then moved off backwards and stopped again. At this point he brought binoculars to study it and was in time to see grey smoke pour out of the underside, slowly enveloping the object. It melted away into the smoke, which then faded away leaving no trace of the object. Total duration 40 minutes. After the encounter he was cold and shivering and his hands visibly shook. He did not advise his parents on their return, but did notice that for some time afterwards birds seemed to avoid flying past the spot where the smoke had appeared, even if it meant a detour in their route. It was this sighting that sparked off his interest in UFOs.

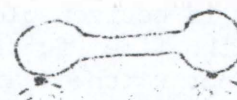
CAR STOP IN NORTHAMPTONSHIRE CE1 EM, Psycho Inv: John Addison & Trevor Thornton

(UAPROL) and Mark Brown (CUFORO)

November 22 1978 Church Stowe, Northants

Mrs Oakensen is head of a teachers centre in Daventry. She drives home to Church Stowe every evening via the A45 and A5 - a short trip which takes her 20 minutes. On this Wednesday she left Daventry at 17.15, noting that her front side light was not working. With darkness coming on she drove away with dipped headlights and as she came onto the A5 she saw ahead two lights, one red to her left and one green, to her right. Assuming it to be an aircraft she drove on watching to see it zoom over her head. As she approached she realised it was stationary and the lights were attached to a grey dumbbell shaped object that was about 50 feet across and spanned the road (height no more than 150 feet). Very puzzled she drove right underneath it, hearing no sound.

Church Stowe is situated atop a hill and as she turned off the A5, leaving the other traffic behind her she follows a minor road into the village. She recalls looking back and still seeing the object, with the green light now flashing on and off. As she switched to third gear power suddenly drained from her engine, but the lights remained on. The car slowed to a halt, but did not quite stop. She noticed her foot flat on the accelerator. The only thing she did was switch down to first gear. The engine responded by immediately revving and she drove on. She drove about 100 yards into the village and recalls that she was by a farm and some houses. She does not recall anything more until she was suddenly in the car with no lights, no engine and no sound at all. She was in the spot she had been a moment before but now the surroundings were eerily dark. Then a series of piercing white strobe lights appeared just above the car roof, flashing on and off. They moved around the car in a semicircular path for about 30 seconds, illuminating the surrounds with each flash. Then the last one shot into the sky and all was dark once more. Mrs Oakensen now suffered a second time lapse and the next thing she recalls is driving the car a few yards on. She does not recall starting it. On arrival home she found she was ten minutes later than she ought to have been and her front sidelight was now working. Otherwise the car was, and still is, normal. Looking out from the bedroom window she saw a yellow pulsing light in the area where the dumbbell had been. It is interesting to compare these 'symptoms' with a migraine attack (blackouts and flashing lights) Is she susceptible and could this have been induced? It is hoped to try to regress Mrs Oakensen to relive the missing minutes. Two hours later on a country road just three miles away whilst travelling towards Church Stowe three women passengers and their driver were paced by a red and green light attached to an unseen object that emitted a brilliant searchlight. It seems possible this was the same object.



March 5 1979 Werrington, Staffs

7948

UNKNOWN

Level A

(26- M,P,S)

Tommy Austin is disabled and confined to a wheelchair but still drives a car. On this evening he had driven his stepbrother Stanley to a pub and they had had a couple of pints (no more as Tommy cannot afford to lose his mobility) Driving home at 00.30 Tommy first spotted a light to the right and pointed it to Stanley. At first he thought it was just the moon but as they watched it approach they saw it was an orange semicircle with a small yellow (non attached) dome on top. It paced the car moving towards and ahead of them at an angle quite fast. They stopped to watch it more closely. They then



followed it again and as it turned from its course to the W now heading WNW they took a side road and accelerated to about 50MPH to keep pace with it. It finally went out of sight by sweeping over rooftops and going down behind them 'as if dematerialising'. The men were terrified it was about to hit the rooftops since at this close approach it was the same size as two full house widths viewed at 50 feet distance - ie huge! At no point was there any sound and the sighting lasted a reconstructed 4 minutes. Cloud ceiling was low and the wind was from the WSW, seemingly rulling out astronomical bodies aircraft or balloons. About two years before Tommy, with another stepbrother, John, (with whom he lives) had another brief encounter at the same pub, from which he was travelling in the second case. Here there was a bang and a white disc streaked overhead, disappearing in seconds. The pub lights momentarily dimmed. Tommy claims no paranormal experiences, but Stanley and John both do. Stanley had a W.W II experience when on guard duty at an old priory (Friars Ride) in Surrey. He saw a column of white smoke rise from the courtyard and slowly form into the head and face of a tall man. He ran to his superiors in terror. John's experiences were both at about the time of the first UFO encounter and involved his wife also. They were once followed along a Cheshire road by a small globe of light. Then they once stopped at a petrol station hemming in a car in front. John's wife pointed out a man staring at him from the car in front. He looked and was horrified. It was a friend and soldier colleague who had been shot and killed in N. Ireland. He turned for a second and stammered an explanation to his wife. When they looked back car and 'ghost' had vanished although the car had been impossibly hemmed in and could only have got out by flying!

A NEW CE4 EXPERIENCE FOR GAYNOR SUNDERLAND Report by Jenny Randles (MUFORA)

Readers will recall the story of Gaynor Sunderland (now 12) and her 1976 sighting of a landed UFO plus silver suited entities in a field near her Oakenholt, Clwyd home. (Full details of this and multiple after effects to be featured in FSR Vol 25 Nos 3 and 4) On June 26 at 9am Mrs Sunderland called me to advise of a CE4 Gaynor told her she had had that night. I spoke to Gaynor at first opportunity in the evening and this is the story that emerged.

It was a humid night and Gaynor went to bed, as usual, at 20.30. She read a book about her favourite hobby (ice skating) then lay wide awake looking at the sky and wondering if horizon clouds would bring rain. At 22.15 Mrs Sunderland looked in and told her the time (future estimates are based on this). She confirms Gaynor was wide awake. Gaynor watched darkness settle until at about 23.00, she thinks, she suddenly started feeling dizzy. She was looking at the ceiling but now seemed to be travelling along a dark tunnel. Blackness was all around. The dizziness lasted about 10 seconds. She saw figures at the end of the tunnel and then suddenly she was in lightness, stood in a field with grass, trees and a stream. The two original entities were standing there wearing clothes (the man trunks and a green top suit with 'wings' at the shoulder, the woman a pale pink dress with a hemline at the knee) In between them was a boy, dressed like the man and looking about 2 to 3 years old. She held a short conversation during which the woman told her she was called ARNA and the man PARS. When she asked where she was she was told 'You have come far away'. Gaynor now held the woman's hand and instantly was in a city, which they 'flew over'. She described this in graphic detail. The sun was very big and dark red. Then they returned to the field and had a further conversation with messages such as that they will come again and try to live in peace, promiss of a gift that they would help Gaynor achieve and the enigmatic comment that "we come to you in your darkness". Eventually the tunnel returned and she was back in bed wide awake. She estimates the time was now about 23.45. She slept easily. It is interesting to note that at 23.20 (amidst the experience) Mrs Sunderland went into the bedroom and found Gaynor unusually deep asleep 'as if in a trance'. At 00.30 she went in again (she was watching a film on TV) and found Gaynor sleeping normally. A fuller report on these events will appear in FSR in due course.
